

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSI, BU

SUBJECT: POST LANGUAGE PROGRAM - FY 76

1. SUMMARY: UNDER CONTINUING RESOLUTION POST LANGUAGE BUDGET FOR FY-76 IS INADEQUATE TO MEET PRESENT LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS OF POST. CONSEQUENTLY, WE REQUEST ADDITIONAL FUNDS NOT MERELY TO MAINTAIN LEVEL OF PROGRAM AT END OF LAST FY BUT TO EXPAND PROGRAM TO MEET DEMANDS OF THOSE DESIRING LANGUAGE TRAINING.

2. CONTINUING RESOLUTION REQUIRES POST MAINTAIN PROGRAM AT SAME LEVEL AS LAST FY WHICH IN CASE OF SOFIA IS \$350 PER QUARTER FOR NEXT FIVE QUARTERS. UNFORTUNATELY, POST LANGUAGE EXPENSES HERE HIGHLY SKEWED TOWARD SECOND HALF OF LAST YEAR WITH MID-YEAR BUDGET INCREASE FROM \$700 TO \$1400 PER ANNUM ALLOWING FOR GREAT EXPANSION OF CLASSROOM TRAINING. RATE OF LANGUAGE EXPENDITURES FOR LAST TWO QUARTERS OF FY 75 WAS APPROXIMATELY \$450-500, AND RESULT IS WE ARE PRESENTLY UNDERGOING CONTRACTION OF PROGRAM AT A TIME WHEN NEW PERSONNEL REQUIRING SUCH TRAINING ARE ARRIVING AT POST. EMBASSY URGES UPWARD READJUSTMENT OF ALLOTMENT FOR LANGUAGE TRAINING TO \$500 PER QUARTER TO INSURE MINIMUM FUNDING OF PROGRAM.

3. FOLLOWING CONDITIONS DICTATE OUR REQUEST:

A) INFLUX OF NEW PERSONNEL. WITHOUT ADEQUATE FUNDING THEIR ENTRANCE INTO CLASSES IS BEING POSTPONED WHILE THOSE IN CLASSES ARE FORCED TO CUT SHORT THEIR
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TRAINING.

B) UNIQUENESS OF BULGARIAN. BULGARIAN IS A DIFFICULT LANGUAGE, AND THE SECOND LANGUAGE CAPABILITY OF MOST BULGARIANS IS RUSSIAN. FRENCH, GERMAN, AND ENGLISH ARE NOT COMMONLY KNOWN HERE WITH THE RESULT THAT FEW IF ANY NEW ARRIVALS AT POST HAVE ANY COMMON LANGUAGE WITH WHICH TO COPE.

C) CLOSED NATURE OF SOCIETY RESTRICTING NORMAL CONTACTS. IT IS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR INDIVIDUALS AT POST TO DEVELOP NORMAL CONTACTS AND FRIENDSHIPS OUTSIDE EMBASSY WHICH WOULD ENABLE THEM TO PRACTICE ON A REGULAR BASIS AND UTILIZE WHAT BULGARIAN THEY HAVE LEARNED. PERSONNEL HAVING LANGUAGE BACKGROUND REQUIRE CONTINUED TRAINING TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE LANGUAGE ABILITY FOR THOSE SITUATIONS WHEN SUCH KNOWLEDGE IS ESSENTIAL.

4. IN ADDITION TO NECESSITY OF PROFICIENCY IN BULGARIAN TO PERMIT NORMAL OPERATIONS OF POST WE FEEL EXPANDED LANGUAGE BUDGET WOULD BE STRONG FACTOR IN IMPROVING POST MORALE. EASING OF LANGUAGE BARRIERS WOULD ENABLE PERSONNEL TO OVERCOME AT LEAST PART OF ISOLATION THEY NOW FACE. MINOR SUMS REQUIRED WOULD BE WELL WORTH EXPENSE IN TERMS BOTH OF ENHANCED OPERATIONS OF POST AND MORALE OF PERSONNEL.
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